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## MY EASTER HOLIDAY.

I HAVE not as yet reached the period of middle life, according to the common reckoning, but I have been a Fellow of my college—engaged in what is humorously termed ‘the active duties of tuition’—for nearly a dozen years; and that species of existence is apt to prematurely age a man. Early Port, the exclusive study of the Greek Particles, and nine Chapels a week, take the youth out of one’s constitution. Moreover, the attentions of females, which restore juvenescence, I am told, as bears’ grease arrests baldness, and bids the lessening locks once more to cluster hyacinthine on the manly brow, have been always wanting to put the drag on to my revolving years. However attractive I may have personally been to the fair sex, they have not been so carried away by their affections as to forget that if I married I should lose my Fellowship, and therewith a considerable portion of my income. While the Royal Commission upon the universities was in session, and the proposition was mooted, that persons in my position should be permitted to wive, there was a marked improvement in the behaviour of the gentler portion of the human race towards myself; but upon the point being decided in favour of celibacy, there was an immediate relapse. Even the impulsively tender—the class which I believe is termed ‘the gushing’—turned off the tap of their sensibilities with a promptitude scarcely to be expected from persons of such an unworldly character; they froze, I say, in four-and-twenty hours, or less, like pipes from the New River Company in a winter’s night, only without the least danger of bursting—that is, of breaking their hearts. From that date, I say, I was regarded by matrons with marriageable daughters not only as ineligible, but as one belonging to the most dangerous classes, from whom nothing but aimless flirtation could be expected; while even if the daughters did do a little with me in that way, it was only when there was nobody else to be got. I have had fair fingers resting with apparent trustfulness within my own, snatched remorselessly away, and transferred to the custody of a sabalteru in a marching-regiment; I have given very expensive dinners in my college-rooms to young ladies, whose mothers sat by their side, all smiles for me, and yet who knew that those girls were going out on the 20th of the succeeding month to Calcutta, with their *trousseaux* in their travelling-trunks.

As time went on, even these thin veils of hypocrisy were dispensed with, and the most favourably disposed of fair ones have long considered me in the light of a benevolent uncle, prohibited by the tables of consanguinity from becoming their husband, but from whom the most expensive presents could be accepted without obligation or impropriety. For my own part, I have gradually acquiesced in this state of things. When I am not what is technically called the Father of my college, a periodical office which I sometimes fill, and which would make Hebe consider herself a dowager, I feel as if I really were a sort of universal uncle. I need not say that I am godfather to a considerable portion of the rising generation, that monthly nurses hail my advent, and that my silversmith’s bill for mugs alone is something considerable. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that I am precociously respectable, immaturely square-toed—the very reverse of Falstaff, with the exception of wit, in which (if I may write it with modesty) I believe I am not deficient. It is not indeed wit of that rude nature which, imported from town by briefless barristers at Christmas, not seldom sets the tables of our combination-rooms in an unseemly roar; but for turning a neat epigram in the Latin language, I acknowledge no superior. Such are not indeed matters of *impromptu*; on the contrary, weeks elapse before the precious stone of thought is converted into the jewel—but then, what perfection! what flawless coruscation! My infallible test for all literature, and especially for your unintelligible modern English poetry, is this, can I—Eusebius Grayboy—turn it into Latin verse, or can I not? If I can’t, it’s rubbish. If I can’t understand it, nobody can understand it. Don’t talk to me about its suggestiveness. Nobody wants anything of that sort, but the Radicals. The royal foundation to which I have the honour to belong has existed, ay, and flourished, too (as our bursar will tell you), for more than three hundred years, and nobody has heard, I believe, of its having ever suggested anything yet. If I seem over-warm upon this matter, forgive me. I am the best-tempered man in the world, except upon three subjects: Suggestive Poetry, the College Port, and the power of discrimination just alluded to inherent in the Latin verse of my own composition. Touch me on any of those sacred points, and I am ‘a maniac slinging flame.’ About any other things, I defy Mr John Bright himself to

ruffle me. I am a clergyman, it is true; we who are in residence at St Boniface are all obliged to be so; but I am no bigot. When the barristers already alluded to, whose fellowships have expired, but who come down to see their old friends every Christmas-tide, rally us good-naturedly about our monastic habits (which, I must confess, are the reverse of ascetic), I enjoy the joke without wincing. When they call me a Thirty-niner, with reference to those Articles which I have very willingly subscribed, I merely smile, and arrange my white cravat. I am afraid I like those lively, high-spirited, affectionate young men, who, although of my own standing, are almost like freshmen compared with myself. I don't mind their slapping me on my back, so long as no undergraduate sees them do it, and calling me a jolly old boy. I am an old boy, and I flatter myself that I am a jolly one. During that week of Christmas festivities, I seem to renew my youth, although, after our guests have departed, I suffer from the effects of the late hours, the suppers, and 'the Silky'—a most seductive but pernicious drink. When I last parted from them at our railway station, with that long lingering grasp of the hand, beyond which the eloquence of British friendship can no further go, one said: 'Now, remember, Grayboy, you have promised to come with us at Easter to meet the summer in the Isle of Wight. "Come when no graver cares employ . . .

You'll have no scandal while you dine,  
But honest talk and wholesome wine,  
And only hear the magic gossip  
Garrulous under a roof of pine."

I was delighted with the quotation, for the laureate's welcome to the Isle of Wight is one of the prettiest things you can imagine, when turned into Latin;\* but I had only the dimmest recollection of the promise to which my friend alluded. Still, I couldn't well say (for there were undergraduates on the platform) that covenants after Silky were not binding, so I nodded cheerfully, as if to say: 'You may rely on me; I'll be there.' Still, I was by no means prepared for such a letter as the following, received most appropriately upon the ensuing April 1st:

'DEAR SKEET [a most irreverent abbreviation for Eusebius]—We start on Thursday by 11.30 from Waterloo. We have secured a carriage, but be sure not to be late, as your presence is indispensable. You are our sixth man, and complete the table. [This is a phrase which I have since learned has reference to the game of whist.] The Q. C. is sure to bring cards, so you need not trouble yourself [!]. That four-cornered college-cap of yours might be convenient to deal upon, if the hint be not sacrilegious; but I think you had better leave your white choker at home, lest the stiffening should be taken out of it. Remember, you have promised.—Ever yours,

CHRISTOPHER LITART.

The tone of this epistle was by no means assuring to a person of my character; it was suggestive of disrespectability in a very high degree, and could not easily be rendered into hexameters. What holidays I had hitherto taken, had always been in the Long Vacation, and I had spent them in a professional manner, at Rome, at Athens, and among the ruins of Carthage. Upon my return from each of those interesting spots, I had given to the learned world the result of my observations in quarto; and a very pretty sum they had cost me. But what advantage should I be able to confer upon my fellow-creatures by a visit to *Vect* or *Vectis*?—for it is doubtful by what name the Romans called the *Weet*, or *With*, or *Wiet* of Domesday-Book. To revive the theory of its being the *Ictis* mentioned as the mart for the export-

ation of tin to Gaul, would be to arouse a hornet's nest of antiquaries. In what unfit company, too, was I going for the settlement of such weighty questions. Was Christy Litart the sort of man to share an interest in the ancient Belge? Would Shortand, who, I believe, writes for *Punch*, when he is not drawing settlements, permit of my calling Caris-brooke by its proper name, Whitgarasburg, as given to it by Stuf, the nephew of Cerdic the Saxon? No; he would call it Stuf-and-nonsense. Would not the Q. C. (so-termed) treat with ridicule the zeal of the pious Ceadwalla, who, we are told, 'set upon the Ile of Wight (in 686), and well neere destroyed all the inhabitants, having bound himself by a vow to give a fourth part of it to the Lord, and thus brought it to the true faith last of all other the parties of this owre Britain.' Moreover, was there no impropriety in taking a holiday so early in the year at all? An Easter trip, however short, seemed to me like spending one's income in advance; or like those forty winks one sometimes indulges in before dinner, and pays for so exorbitantly at night. Still, as Litart said, I had promised; and Eusebius Grayboy is a man of his word.

I omit any description of our travel by the South-western Railway; let it suffice to say that we seemed to get over the ground uncommonly fast, and saw very little of the country. On that short, but often decisive sea-passage to the Island, I was *not ill*, and that is all I can say. If the Ryde pier had been twenty yards shorter, I don't think I could have said as much. There I had prepared a surprise for my friends, and a triumph for myself. In the expectation of a crowded train and insufficient carriage-accommodation, I had written, under advice, to one Mr Weal (an aboriginal fly-proprietor) to bespeak a vehicle to take the whole party on to Ventnor. But at the end of the pier we were worried by wild fly-drivers just as badly as though I had taken no precautions whatever. No bespoken vehicle appeared, and we were assured that no Mr Weal was even in existence. On the mainland, said they, such a man might be, and even let out wheeled conveyances, but on that island there was certainly no such person. In this they all agreed, and made affidavits before Shortand, whom, as having the judicial faculty much developed, we appointed to administer the same. But no sooner had we covenanted with one of their body, than all the rest went and informed Mr Weal, who presently drove up with a private omnibus, and an air of precise punctuality.

The ride outside to Ventnor, 'twixt the sea and the fenceless down, may be described in some future illustrated edition of this paper, but cannot be depicted by words. Here we were shut in by banks of primroses, with a sky to roof us borrowed from Italy; and here the hoary Channel tumbled a breaker on chalk and sand immediately beneath us; now we rolled through a fairy village, every cottage of which was *ornée*, and its garden bright with flowers that would scarce be seen elsewhere for months to come; and here the scene suddenly changed to the rifted chasms and wild disorder of the Undercliff, and the strong sweet scent of the wall-flowers was overwhelmed with the Smell of the Sea. Ah, delicious, invigorating fragrance, ah, mysterious odour, let me sniff thee once again. What matter if thou art, as some will have it, but the offsprung of marine decay; to me thou art a sacred incense, redolent of youth and joy, and the irrevocable Past. Thy sudden perfume bears with it a score of happy memories; a gallery of pleasant pictures opens before my inward eye; in my ear whisper dear tones which I shall never more hear in this world, and I am a child once more by the side of the unchangeable sea. Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean—tears from the depth of some divine despair, rise in the heart and gather to the eyes, whenever this odour greets me, and even Latin verse refuses to perform its critical function.

\* Non mordax aderit lingua cubentibus,  
Sed sermo modicus vique molliis,  
Dum te pica loquax murmurare garrulo  
Mulet sub trabe pineis.

'There's a short way across the fields, and a beautiful view,' observed the driver, as he stopped his horses at the foot of a tremendous hill; 'if any gent or gents would like to get out.'

'Ah,' observed the Q. C., who inclines to corpulence—'ah, I dare say; but he did not move a hair-breadth.'

'Gentlemen always gets out here to save the horses,' continued the driver.

'That's another thing, my man; I only object to exertion when obtained under false pretences.' With which characteristic remark the stout Q. C. was the first to descend the quivering vehicle, and lead the way up the footpath. Ventnor is always full at Easter, and we were fortunate in having secured our rooms at the hotel beforehand. I say the hotel from a praiseworthy desire not to offend those caravansaries not patronised by our party. Almost all the inns in the Fair Island are peculiarly picturesque and pleasant, with verandahs and gardens, at least, if not with 'romantic pleasure-grounds,' sinuous, umbrageous, and specially adapted for the Neogams—the newly married couples—who resort to these bowers of bliss in immense numbers. One meets these loving pairs in all directions, sitting hand in hand in private conveyances, or with their heads uncommonly close together in secluded land-locked bays. The silly creatures imagine that they deceive the public by pretending, when discovered, to be engaged in picking up shells, of which, as is well known, there are none whatever found in the locality. It was sad to see them turned away from the hotel towards evening, as they arrived, lapped in dreamy ease, and without having taken any precautions for their accommodation. 'We have no sitting-room disengaged except the coffee-room,' was the usual verdict of our sympathising landlady; and then there was a whispered colloquy between the female neogam and 'dearest Charles,' during which the former would shake her head, as it seemed to me [but then I have taken the veil, and may be prejudiced], with most unnecessary decision, and the horses' heads would be turned, and the disappointed couple return to the less-crowded dovecot from which they came. The whole six of us, in common with all the other residents at the hotel, would watch these proceedings from the verandah, and although always terminating as I have described, they never failed to please. The Neogams are among the greatest attractions of the island, as everybody except themselves is well aware; they have flocked to it, like the sea-gulls, ever since it was separated from the mainland by the Solent, as the current is called (from *solvere*) which effected that divorce; and so it will probably be as long as there are honeymoons.

Neogams, then, being its principal import, the exports—the Fairy Commerce—of the place are native diamonds, pictures composed of the tinted sands of Alum Bay, and mugs with 'A Present from the Isle of Wight' inscribed upon them. The natural productions not exported are flies drawn by one or two horses, and built upon the model of the first fly (*temp. circa 2000 B.C.*)\* The literature is mainly comprised in the writings of the Rev. Legh Richmond, author of *The Dairyman's Daughter*, a work not only of European celebrity, but which has been placed by missionaries in hands of every description of colour.

This is the humorous side of the locality, but elements of sublimity are by no means wanting. This enchanted garden, blooming with flowers, and haunted by lovers, has very grim surroundings. The envious sea is kept at bay by giant cliffs, silver-shining, sheer, whereof no sooner does one face disappear, undermined by the waves, than another presents itself, no less defiant—white, not with terror, but with determi-

nation—and the protracted contest recommences. At long intervals, enormous land-slips take place, which at first 'confusedly hurled, like fragments of an earlier world,' become gradually covered with foliage, and Beauty is born of Chaos. At some of the charming little hotels, their fairy-like prettiness is diversified by frightful figureheads of lost vessels, set upon the lawn by way of ornament. This fair lady (with her nose off) was once the representative of the *British Queen*, from Sunderland, which came ashore yonder in that now waveless bay, and left no other relic in the resemblance of human form; she perished like the *Royal George*, 'with all her crew complete.' At that rounded point, where the tide grows white-lipped even on so calm a day as this, the *Lord Nelson* and the *America* both went to pieces in the same storm. His lordship lost his other arm, poor fellow! on that terrible night; and the lady parted with her stars and stripes by premature Secession. Moreover, as another element now melodramatic, but once dangerous enough, let me mention Smugglers. Every Chine that the visitor now pays twopenny to descend by aid of indifferent steps, was once a landing-place for tobacco, and lace, and brandy; the coast-guardsmen, who now dozes by his flagstaff, and lends you his spy-glass (not without an eye, perhaps, to another sort of glass in return), had then no sinecure, but kept his cutlass loose in its scabbard. As we lie on the lofty down, looking forth on the sea, a single sail, perhaps, glimmers up from the under-world, and it is pleasant to think that it may be a smuggler or a privateer. The Q. C., who knows everything, as it is the custom of his fraternity to do, remarks that it is 'a rakish-looking craft; so that we may even be so fortunate as to be looking at a pirate. But if so, it is likely to go hard with him, since round the milk-white point comes a stately ship of battle, speeding on by imperceptible means, for we cannot discern the froth about her screw. 'On through zones of light and shadow, she glimmers away to the lonely deep;' but I shall see her yet whenever I will. These are glorious sights, and the monotonous drawl of ocean that accompanies them are their fittest music. It is the island of the Lotus-eaters. The peacock butterfly, emblazoned herald of the summer, moves slowly by me through the warm soft air, nor flits as is the manner of his tribe; the jackdaws from the cliff forbear to wrangle, but slide in noiseless circles at our feet. 'Let us lie reclined for ever on these downs, nor evermore revisit Lincoln's Inn,' observed Litart to his forensic friend; 'we have had enough of "actions" and of "motions," we.'

But the Q. C. smiled but grimly, as one who opined he could never have too much of those things.

'You are not fit, you lawyers,' returned I, 'to set your cloven feet upon such shores as these, and you were not permitted to do so in the good old times. In the Memoirs of Sir John Oglander, it is written, that "not only heretofore was there no lawyer or attorney in this island, but in Sir George Carey's time (1588), an attorney coming to settle on it, was, by his command, with a pound of candles hanging lighted, and with bells about his legs, hunted owte of the place; inasmuch that our ancestors lived here quietly and securely."'

Nevertheless, we were not only Lotus-eaters, but had a corner left for most things edible, so appetite-provoking is the Ventnor air. The Q. C. was in a dreadful state that morning when the ladies in No. 9 managed to possess themselves of our prawns, in spite of all precautions and bespeakings; nor at dinner-time was Christy Litart pleased when he found his strawberry-tart composed entirely of gooseberries. 'The ladies in No. 9,' explained the waiter smiling, 'had consumed all the strawberry-jam.' Nor were surprises and adventures wanting; surprises, as upon one occasion, at 12 P. M., when we were retiring from our sitting-room for the night, in rushed Shortand

\* Upon the advertisement cards of the inns is still printed that mysterious old-world announcement—'Posting in all its branches.'



(who had already made his adieux) with the intelligence that there were three Commercial sleeping in the coffee-room for want of bedchambers. And so they were, for we all went in to look at them.

Then in the way of adventures, we of course re-enacted the scene from the *Antiquary*, and got cut off by the sea; our *advance* by the shore to Shanklin at least was cut off by the high spring-tide, although we could have gone back again, had retreat been consistent with our British natures. Instead of that, we gave a poor fellow a shilling to run over the cliffs, and send a boat for us, which all our signals of distress had failed to evoke. In the meantime, what, think you, happened? The rest of the party—I write it with shame—sat down and played at whist with that pack of cards, without which, I believe, the Q. C. never moves unless he is going into Court; and since the wind disturbed the cards, they made me—the Thirty-niner—keep the tricks! I never before was placed in so disrespeccable a position. The exceptional character of the scene, however, somewhat robbed it of its disgraceful impropriety. The players sat on pebbles, the impress of which they will probably carry to their graves; and they marked, as Giants of the Prime probably marked at whist, with rocks; their games with chalk, their points with masses of marl.

We walked, of course, in all directions, and saw everything that it becomes the tourist to behold; but after all, our greatest sight was seen from our own hotel. One evening, just as we were sitting down to dinner, we observed in the road beneath a great assemblage of the aborigines. Every eye was directed westward towards a solitary speck upon the ocean, half smoke, half flame. A ship on fire nearly opposite Blackgang Chine! Telescope in hand, I ran with slipped feet to join the throng. 'Poor fellows,' said one, referring to the hapless crew, 'they're all smothered; they ha'n't put a single boat out. What do you make out, sir, through that 'ere glass?'

Now, though I had instinctively snatched up the scientific instrument in question, it was perfectly useless to me; for I have never seen anything through a telescope except a blue ball (which I believe to be the firmament) bobbing up and down. So I handed it to the amphibious person who had addressed me, and waited for his views at second-hand. 'I see the flames a-busting out of her hull; and I see—— Darn me, what a smother!'

'Permit me,' observed an amateur-mariner, elaborately attired, and giving one the notion of a man who had left a yacht of his own in some secluded bay, in order to avoid the suspicion of ostentation. 'Ah, we shall not see her long; she is burning down to the water's edge.' A low moan went round the company, who, up to the moment of this authoritative decision, had clung to the hope that there might yet be some mistake.

'I tell you what it is,' observed our peculiar waiter, who had followed us into the street with our dish of mackerel in his hand; 'it's all bunkum. I see that 'ere vessel go by two hours ago, low in the water, and kivered with smoke, so as you could scarcely see her. The sun is a-shining upon her hull, and makes her look a-fire, and that's just all about it.'

The indignation of the spectators at this heartless explanation of a catastrophe which was affording us all such interest and satisfaction, was excessive.

'If that ship is not on fire,' observed the amateur-yachtsman gravely, 'then I never saw a ship on fire in all my life.'

'And perhaps you never did, sir,'\* returned our waiter, with an admirable coolness. 'I bin all round the world myself, and what I says is, it's all bunkum.'

'My dear waiter,' exclaimed the Q. C., who is

opposed to the romantic view of things, 'I believe you are perfectly right.'

The company was immediately divided into two parties, the Believers and the Sceptics, who wrangled together until the subject of dispute had disappeared, as the one protested, below the horizon, or as the other averred, into the vasty deep.

'Poor creetur; you might almost hear her hiss,' murmured a sympathetic boatman.

'There ain't no more heat about her than about these blessed mackerel,' retorted the waiter; and indeed our fish had got disagreeably cold during the discussion.

These startling incidents agreeably diversified our insular existence, although we should have been well content without them. We had gone forth to meet the Summer, and we had met it. Doors open, empty grates, full gardens, had greeted us on our arrival; and every day wove a new chain of flowers to keep us captive. The Fair Isle is a place to live in, and to die only at a very advanced age indeed. It was the cynical opinion of my legal companions that the number of very old people we met at every turn, sunning themselves in the wayside, were all imported; that persons of great longevity were kidnapped from other places, and brought to the Isle of Wight for exhibition, in order to impress visitors with an idea of its salubrity. If this is the case, the inscriptions in the churchyards are doubtless forgeries also. According to these, folks rarely exchange the Garden of England for the Elysian Fields under the age of 85, or so. I culled this epitaph, for example, from the burial-place around St Lawrence's Church—the smallest ecclesiastical fabric in Great Britain:

'To the Memory of —, who met his untimely Death by an Accident in the 91st Year of his Age.'

For effrontery, I think that epitaph surpasses anything.

'Depend upon it,' says Shortand, 'if anybody in the Isle of Wight dies in middle age, they keep it uncommonly dark.'

At all events, no catastrophe of that kind occurred among ourselves; six we had come to Ventnor, and half-a-dozen we returned—only in better case. It was a glorious holiday, and I feel I have not done justice to it in the above description. However, now that I am once more in my college-rooms, with my books about me, I mean to sit down and describe it all in an intelligible and appropriate manner—in Latin Verse.

#### ANTHROPOID APES.

IN the days when we were little inquisitive children, we used frequently to ask original and puzzling questions, and among other things, we remember being very anxious to be informed how monkeys were caught. Our old nurse was ready with an explanation. It appeared, according to her, that the monkey regarded man as much his superior (whatever Professor Huxley may now think to the contrary), and made a point of imitating man's actions, just as we are prone to ape the ways of our betters in the social scale. Man being alive to this weakness of poor Jocko's, took a cruel advantage of it. He repaired to the woods in which the monkeys resided, and depositing a tub of water on the green-sward, washed his hands perseveringly till he found the animals were attentively observing him. He then retired, leaving a number of similar tubs, much to the satisfaction of the simian colony. Led by their apish instinct, down came a multitude of the poor animals, and proceeded, as they thought, to wash themselves. But the treacherous tubs now contained not water, but some sticky compound—a sort of concentrated bird-lime. There the unlucky monkeys stuck like blue-bottles on a catch-'em-alive-o, and the more they struggled, the faster they were held. In the morning, remorseless Man reappeared, when the best fate the captives could hope

\* The nautical gentleman was not stopping at our hotel.

for was to become the companions of a select society of similar exiles in some far-off zoological garden.

However improbable this statement may seem, we firmly believed it; indeed, the good old soul had another anecdote which confirmed this, and put its truthfulness beyond dispute. It was a story of a commercial traveller, who, for some unexplained reason, visited the vast forests of equatorial Africa with a large stock of the best town-made woollen night-caps. It so happened that one sultry afternoon our commercial hero was overtaken by a desire for sleep, and sought repose under a spreading goliath-tree, first wisely taking the precaution of keeping off damp by putting on one of his night-caps. Little did he dream of the dire consequence that awaited him. No sooner was he sound asleep, than all the neighbouring apes, who had been watching him, descended in a body, untied the bundle of night-caps, put on one apiece, and again betook themselves to their trees. The traveller, on being awakened by the chattering of the thieves, looked about in vain for his pack, till, casting his eyes in the direction of the noise, he beheld swinging from branch to branch, five thousand blue-faced baboons, each adorned with one of his precious night-caps. Ruin—blue-ruin—stared him in the face; death by starvation was all that remained for him. Can a more harrowing spectacle be conceived than that of a solitary man in the midst of a vast equatorial forest, robbed of his stock in trade by five thousand blue-faced baboons! The poor fellow ran wildly about, shaking his fists at the criminals in the English style, only to see five thousand pairs of monkey-fists shaken at him in return. Then he tried persuasive gesticulations; but in vain; his every movement was mimicked in a manner that would have been absurd under other circumstances; at last, maddened with passion and despair, he plucked his only remaining night-cap from his head, and flung it furiously at the crowd. In a moment, he was bathed in a shower of night-caps. The five thousand blue-faced baboons, having no idea beyond that of imitating the traveller, simultaneously flung their newly acquired articles of attire furiously back at him. It is on record that he recovered the whole of them, sold them at an enormous profit (though to whom it is not mentioned), and that the fortunate speculator returned safely to England a wealthy merchant.

Our matured judgment ridicules these old-women's stories; yet tales, scarcely less strange and incredible, were not long since submitted to public notice as solemn facts. It was gravely asserted that certain apes existing in Western Africa played tricks scarcely less fantastic than the ones just related. We were told, for instance, that these creatures built detached villas in the forests, and sometimes carried off native women to share with them the pleasures of a home in the jungle; moreover, that the animals in question carried thick walking-sticks, the principal use of which being, it would seem, to belabour elephants on the trunk, should they dare to locate themselves too near the abode of quadrumanous bliss. The stick was not employed in attacking man: a more scientific treatment was reserved for him; he was taken by ambush. The man-like ape would sit on the lower branches of a tree till some unlucky negro sauntered that way, when down came a long hairy leg, with a prehensile foot, gripping the wanderer round the neck, till he became, if possible, blacker in the face than he was before.

Travellers' stories are very roughly handled in these days of severe criticism. The public mind may, indeed, be excited for a time by the publication of sensation narratives of this description; but science soon steps in to hold up before us the mirror of truth. It is refreshing to find so high an authority as Professor Huxley coming forward, in his interesting work on *The Evidence of Man's Place in Nature*, and giving us what may be called an authentic history of the man-

like apes, culled from the most trustworthy sources. It is not only very amusing, but very valuable as a record of all that is at present known with any certainty about these singular creatures.

There are four known existing genera of anthropoid apes; namely, gibbons, orangs, chimpanzees, and gorillas. In structure, they all four present remarkable points of resemblance. They are all without tails. They all possess the same number of teeth—namely, twenty milk-teeth, and thirty-two permanent ones; and be it observed, man possesses the same number of teeth, both first and second sets. Like man also, and unlike the lower apes, their nostrils are divided by a partition, and look downwards. Unlike man, their arms are all longer than their legs. The great toe of the foot of these apes, in common with the lower apes, is smaller and far more movable than in man, so that it can be used like a thumb. The popular belief, that the lower extremities of apes terminate in a hand, is erroneous. Careful dissection shows that the foot of the monkey is a true foot, with a very movable great toe. It is to be regretted that that great naturalist, Cuvier, adopted the term quadrumanous, or four-handed, and applied it distinctively to apes; for the term is calculated, as we have just explained, to disseminate incorrect views. Indeed, great mobility of the great toe, and the power of opposing it—that is, of placing it opposite to the other toes—is by no means confined to the ape tribe; the artisans of Bengal weave with their toes, and Chinese boatmen are able to pull an oar when grasping it with their feet. A very common trick of John Chinaman's is to attach a string to the under-side of a scale, and when weighing articles of commerce, to turn the scale by pulling the string with his foot. In civilised life, we must remember, the toes are thrust into leathern sheaths, and cramped from childhood upwards; but in barefooted people, where the natural play of the parts is allowed, the great toe is very mobile.

The four kinds of man-like apes differ materially from each other in their habits and mode of life. The gibbons, of which there are several species, are all mountain apes, dwelling in the tall trees on the slopes and ridges of hills. In the evening, they descend in small groups to the open ground. They are, however, pre-eminently qualified for arboreal life. It is almost impossible to describe in words the grace and rapidity of their wondrous Leotard-like movements. Using only their hands and arms, or rather, holding by one hand only, the gibbon launches himself by an energetic movement to a distant branch. There, however, his hold is less than momentary; another branch is similarly aimed at by the other hand, and so on; spaces of twelve, eighteen, and even, it is said, of forty feet being easily cleared at a single bound. The exertion is often kept up uninterruptedly for hours without the animal's manifesting any fatigue. Sometimes they will throw somersaults in their course, making a pivot of one hand only, and swinging round with such velocity as almost to deceive the eye. We quote the following anecdote, in order to give an idea of the strength of the gibbons, and at the same time of the extraordinary delicacy and precision of their movements. A female gibbon has been known to throw herself at a window across a passage twelve feet wide, and, catching the narrow framework between the panes with her fingers, to spring back into her cage, and this without any injury to the glass.

Though gibbons refuse most animal food, they will eat insects; they drink by dipping their fingers into liquid, and licking them. It is affirmed, but the statement requires verification, that the females carry their young to the water-side in order to wash their faces. The young ones are said to cry and to resist the operation, an event not at all uncommon among the juveniles of the highest vertebrata. Be the washing story true or not, this is certain, that young gibbons in captivity are gentle and affectionate, and

when teased, cry like children. They have also a sort of conscience: thus, it is related of a tame gibbon, that he was very fond of deranging the knickknacks in his master's cabin, like a kitten playing with a ball of string. When corrected for this, he would do it on the sly, glancing furtively about to see whether he was being watched. The moment he found he was observed, he would replace any article he had in his hand, and pretend, like the boy laden with snowballs in front of a broken window, that it 'wasn't him.'

Gibbons take readily to the erect posture. When erect, they either keep the elbows and wrists bent, and the arms raised to the back of their heads, to throw the centre of gravity back, or they hold their arms uplifted, and hands pendent, to balance themselves, as a pole balances a rope-walker. They walk with a quick, waddling gait, and at higher speeds they place the knuckles of their enormously long arms on the ground, using them like crutches, and rather swinging forward than running. They place the whole length of the sole of their feet flat on the ground, and have, consequently, no elasticity of step.

The *orang-outangs* live in the densest and most sombre forests. They are generally met with in twos and threes, except the old males, who live alone. In their movements, they are as unlike as possible to the gibbons. They never make the smallest jump, are slow and sluggish, and are only stirred to exertion by the presence of hunger or of danger. When not disturbed, they remain in one spot for hours together, and inhabit one tree for many days. When they move, they crawl rather than climb from one tree to another, moving slowly and cautiously, climbing hand over hand like a man, and drawing both feet together after them. In climbing, they take the greatest care of their feet, any injury to that part seeming to affect the animal seriously. Even when closely pursued, the phlegmatic circumspection of the orang does not desert him: he shakes the branches, to assure himself that they will bear him, before venturing to trust his weight to them.

The orang is immensely powerful. He is said to fight crocodiles, beating them to death, and ripping up their throats by pulling their jaws asunder. This is probably a fiction, parallel to the native story, that the gorilla has pugilistic encounters with elephants, in which the elephant comes off second-best. Notwithstanding his great strength, the orang rarely defends himself, especially if attacked with firearms. He seems to hold the opinion that discretion is the better part of valour, and endeavours to escape from man by hiding himself. When brought to bay, however, he becomes very energetic; he flies into a desperate rage, uttering loud, pumping grunts, and throwing down branches and other missiles at his pursuers. One animal, on being hunted into a durian tree—a tree bearing heavy-spined fruits as large as thirty-two pounders—threw these at his pursuers with such precision and force, as effectually to make them keep clear of the tree he was on.

Like the gibbon, the orang descends late in the day to the ground, returning to his tree to sleep, choosing a firm place among the lower branches, ten or twenty feet from the ground, for his bed. Here he constructs a sort of large nest, two or three feet in circumference, with small boughs, drawn together and bent across each other, with leaves for a mattress, to make the bed soft and comfortable. This is the hut which these animals are said to build; it is nothing more than a bed of leaves, having no perpendicular walls, and no roof. On cold nights, the orang covers his body with leaves, and is especially careful to wrap his head in them, which may perhaps account for the night-cap speculation related in the early part of this paper. The motto of the orang seems to be early to bed, and late to rise: he retires to his couch about five o'clock in the afternoon, and does not get up till nine o'clock next morning, by which time the

sun has dissipated the mists. This fact will no doubt carry great comfort and consolation to people who are fond of lying in bed in the morning. Some folks consider it unhealthy and unnatural, but that cannot be when animals in a state of nature do not rise till the day is aired.

In confinement, the orang is false and wicked to the last degree, though, when taken very young, he can be domesticated, and made to behave tolerably well to persons he knows. On the appearance of strangers, he will slowly approach them, and insinuate his hand, with apparently friendly intentions, through the bars of his cage. On a sudden, he will extend his long arm, and make a gripe at any portion of the dress or person of the beholder that happens to be within reach, taking the face for choice. Orangs never bite, their organs of offence are the hands; in this they differ from gibbons, who bite, but do not pinch. The orang goes mostly on all-fours. He cannot put his foot flat on the ground, but supports it on the outer edge, like an accomplished skater. He is obliged to help himself along with his hands, supporting himself, singularly enough, by their inner edge only. His walk is consequently laborious and shaky; he never stands on his hind-legs alone.

The Asiatic anthropoid apes, just described, being approached with comparative ease, naturalists are acquainted with their habits and mode of life; but little is known of the African anthropoids, owing to the physical difficulties and dangers which prevent our exploring the tropical wilds where these animals are distributed. The information we do possess has been obtained principally from the natives, who are only too ready to supply us with mythical reports and traditions. The following statement, therefore, concerning these apes, obtained by sifting the best existing testimony, must be taken with some reserve.

It is a singular fact, that the chimpanzee and the gorilla, though the last of the anthropoid apes scientifically described, were the first discovered. Two hundred and fifty years ago, an Englishman, by name Andrew Battell, who served as a band-sergeant to the Portuguese, and was by them sent prisoner to Angola, in Africa, brought home from the kingdom of Congo—now Cillongo on the maps—some extraordinary tales of the greater and lesser monsters of Africa, which, from his description, we are now able to identify with the two African anthropoid apes. The lesser monster was long ago known to be the chimpanzee, for Battell gives it the name of *Engeco*, a corruption of the African *N'shego*, by which name the animal is known at the present day to the natives of the Gaboon country. Buffon converted Battell's *Engeco* into *Enjoco*, afterwards metamorphosed into *Jocko*, a name which, owing to the extensive popularity of Buffon's works, became a household word all over Europe.

Battell's lesser monster being thus proved clearly to exist, a strong presumption arose that the greater monster would eventually be discovered. Travellers heard from time to time of the existence of a great ape, five feet high, and four across the shoulders, who built a rude house, in which he slept, and who was remarkable for his great ferocity. This animal was, of course, the gorilla, with which we have but lately made a personal acquaintance.

The chimpanzee is the first of the man-like apes that was ever brought alive to Europe. One, supposed to be a satyr, was presented to the Prince of Orange about the year 1640. Chimpanzees resemble gibbons in some of their habits, and orangs in others. They occasionally stand and walk; but when they see a man, they take to all-fours, no doubt to increase their pace, and flee. The position assumed by the animals when standing is not erect, but leaning forward, with the hands clasped at the back of the head or across the loins, which seems necessary to their balance or ease of posture. The toes are



strongly flexed and turned inwards, shewing that the full expansion of the foot necessary for walking is not natural to these animals. The chimpanzees are, in fact, tree-apes, swinging, like the gibbon, with astonishing agility. Like the orang, they construct nests. They are generally seen in companies of four or five together, though it is said that they occasionally assemble in large numbers for the purpose of amusing themselves. The entertainment at their pleasure-parties consists for the most part of hooting and screaming, and drumming with sticks on old logs of wood, for which purpose they use either hands or feet. They never attack man; and when pursued, they seldom defend themselves. If compelled to do so, they use their teeth like the gibbons. They exhibit a remarkable degree of intelligence; thus, when in danger, they have been known to motion to the hunter with the hand to go away, in the manner of a human being. When wounded, they press their hands to the part, and apply grass and leaves to stanch the flow of blood. The natives have a tradition that they were formerly men, who were expelled their tribe on account of their depraved habits, and that an obstinate indulgence in their vile propensities has caused them to degenerate into their present state. When wild, they live on vegetable food; but in captivity, they easily acquire a fondness for flesh.

The gorilla, of all the anthropoid apes, approaches most nearly to man. We know but little of his habits, and that little is based on the accounts of the savage tribes of equatorial Africa. The gorilla is covered with black and brown hair, which, with age, becomes gray. This has given rise to the report that the animal is seen of different colours. The indescribably ferocious aspect of the gorilla is due chiefly to the hairy ridge on his scalp running from ear to ear. The animal, when enraged, contracts the scalp over his brow; thus carrying the hairy ridge forward, and producing the fierce appearance to which all his biographers refer. The gorilla walks with a shuffling, rolling gait, assisting his speed by touching his hands on the ground like the gibbons—only the latter use the knuckles for this purpose, while the gorilla uses the palm. The gorilla does not stoop so much as the chimpanzee, because his arms are longer. Gorillas are polygamists, living in small bands, with but one male to each band, the strongest driving out and killing the others. Like the other anthropoid apes, they build nests, not houses, for they afford no shelter, and are occupied only at night.

The king of the forest is distinguished from the other man-like apes by his offensive habits. He does not run from man, as they do; but, at the approach of danger, if he hears, or, it is said, even scents a man, he prepares for action, gallantly conducting the females and young to a place of safety, and then returns, approaching his antagonist in a stooping posture, but rising to his feet when he makes an attack. He comes up in great fury, uttering his shrill, prolonged, terrific yell, with the design, it would seem, of terrifying his opponent. The hunter awaits his approach till the creature is close enough to rise to the attack. Then is the moment to fire at him. With a cool nerve and steady aim, the huge beast must be shot dead, any hesitation or miscarriage of his weapon being fatal to the hunter. It is a case of do or die. If the aim is not well directed, the animal grasps the gun-barrel, crushes it between his powerful teeth, and strikes his pursuer a death-blow with the palm of his hands; or seizing him with a grasp, from which there is no escape, dashes him on the ground, and lacerates him with his tusks.

Young gorillas have been captured alive, but it has been found impossible to tame them. They remain savage and implacable to the last, submission to man being apparently a condition that no gorilla, as Lord Dundreary would say, can possibly understand.

If we compare these statements with what is

positively known respecting the orang and the gibbon, we shall see that they are in all probability near the truth. Thus the gorilla is better fitted, structurally, to assume the erect position than the gibbon. The orang fights with its hands, the gibbon and chimpanzee with their teeth; the gorilla may probably enough do either, or both; and the statement that the gorilla builds a nest is credible enough, since we know that that is the habit of the other anthropoids.

That the gorilla approaches in structure so nearly to man, is highly distasteful to a large number of sensitive persons. They see, or fancy they see, something humiliating in being classed with these brutal creatures, whose instincts scarcely carry them beyond the gratification of their animal wants, whose passions are unsubdued, and whose affections are unrefined. But if the case really be so, ought it not, like all the other general arrangements of Providence, to be reverentially submitted to? Besides, if man, in his spiritual nature, is only a little lower than the angels, does it matter much what he is in bodily respects?

### GLEANINGS FROM DARK ANNALS.

#### CHILD-STEALING.

ONE of the worst features of the British criminal code of half a century ago was the disproportionate character of its punishments. In most cases, it was ruthlessly cruel, but in others it awarded penalties very much too lenient. For offences against authority, property, and commerce, it rarely inflicted anything short of death; while for crimes which steeped whole families in misery, and which are repugnant to every natural feeling, but a slight expiation was often demanded. In 1795, during the passage of his majesty George III's state-coach through the streets on his way to open parliament, the populace expressed their disapprobation of his policy. Among a number of disorderly persons, none of whom seems to have behaved worse than his fellows, one Kidd Wake was apprehended. He was proved to have uttered the treasonable exclamations of 'No war, no George;' he was also accused of malignancy of aspect; but this was accounted for, by the witnesses for the defence, on the ground that he had a defect in his sight, which always had the effect of producing a distortion of his features whenever he attempted to look particularly at any object. Mr Justice Ashurst informs this criminal, when brought up to receive judgment, that his crime is 'most atrocious, and almost unprecedented;' that he might have been convicted of a much more serious offence, but for the mercy of the crown; and that his case, even as it stood, afforded an admirable instance 'of the unequalled mildness of the laws of this country,' since anywhere else he would certainly have paid the forfeit of his life. 'It now,' he concludes, 'becomes my duty to pronounce the sentence of the court, which is, that you be committed to the custody of the keeper of the Penitentiary House in and for the county of Gloucester, and be kept to hard labour for the space of five years; and within the first three months of that time, that you stand in and upon the pillory for one hour, between the hours of eleven and two o'clock in the afternoon, in some public street in Gloucester, on a market-day; and that you give sureties in one thousand pounds\* for your good-behaviour for the term of ten years, to be computed from the expiration of the said five years; and that you be further imprisoned till you find the said sureties.'

In the same year, one Elizabeth Hall (a female fiend only second in atrocity to Mrs Brownrigg), for beating two little girls, apprenticed to her by the parish, almost to death, and working them from four

\* The prisoner thus addressed is a labouring-man, with a wife dependent upon his daily work for support, so that the sentence is equivalent to one of imprisonment for life.

o'clock in the morning until eleven at night, on potatoes and salt, is awarded six months' imprisonment for each offence, and to pay a fine of three shillings and fourpence!

Twenty years later, the law was even still more lenient towards the Cruel—a fellow-feeling probably rendering it wondrous kind in their case—for we find one Mrs Hunter and her servant sentenced, the one but to eighteen months, and the other to six only, for roasting a child.

The consideration of infants generally—but especially of parish infants—seems, indeed, to have been beneath the dignity of the law. Up to the year 1811, you might purloin a baby with comparative impunity, whereas, if you stole a watch above the value of nine-and-thirty shillings, you would be hanged. At this period, however, a child of respectable parents having been abstracted, the offence of child-stealing was made felony, and subject to the punishment of transportation. The particular case which caused this alteration in the statute-book is a very remarkable one. At its outset, it was exceedingly obstructed by mis-identification of the offender.

The question of personal identity, in the case of adults, at least, would seem to be one of comparative ease, yet, in our criminal annals, there is nothing more common than a unanimity, among the most well-meaning persons, in mistaking the innocent for the guilty. Two innocent young men were placed in 1785 at the bar of the Old Bailey for robbing Sir William Davenport (one of the king's sergeants of the Court of Common Pleas) on the Uxbridge Road. 'As far as one man can swear to another,' said he, looking full upon the accused, 'the prisoners at the bar robbed me, as I have described.' Lady Davenport, as in duty bound, corroborated her husband's testimony. Then came the coachman and footman, who followed with equal decision upon the same side. Upon adjournment to the courtyard of the prison, all these persons swore that two horses there exhibited (the property of the accused) were the same horses ridden by the highwaymen. Fortunately for the prisoners, however, one of them happened to be a member of a respectable club in Kentish Town, the anniversary dinner of which had been held in his own house, on the very evening on which the robbery was committed. An alibi was also clearly established in the case of his companion. No particular likeness appears to have existed between these innocent men and those who afterwards confessed to the crime in question. Bartholomew Greenwood, Esq., rider to the 1st Troop of Horse Guards, was sworn to, on a previous occasion, with equal pertinacity, by a gentleman of the name of Wheatly, as having robbed him in a field near Camberwell; and if the accused had been of a less respectable rank in life, and his witnesses less honourable persons, it would have gone very hard with him; for as nothing is so conclusive as an alibi, so nothing is so open to suspicion. Richard Coleman was actually executed for the murder of Sarah Green, through the mis-identification of him by the dying woman. Being charged with the offence, he had absconded, and hid himself, which doubtless weighed greatly against him with the jury, although he had issued an advertisement from his place of concealment, setting forth his innocence, and announcing his intention of delivering himself up at the next assizes. The memory of this unfortunate man was fully cleared of the matter.

In the child-stealing case which follows, an innocent lady, the wife of a surgeon in the navy, was identified as the kidnapper by several witnesses, on more than one examination, and even committed for trial at the Old Bailey. At last, however, the law laid its uncertain fingers upon the real criminal, one Mrs Magnis of Gosport. This woman was the wife of a sailor—a gunner on board one of her majesty's ships, but who seems to have possessed property very much more

considerable than is usually owned by that improvident class. He had been always earning this money in cruising, and hence it happened that of all land affairs he was extraordinarily ignorant, and of a most credulous and simple mind. His knowledge of the female character, notwithstanding that he was married, appears to have been particularly limited. He had a sailor's confidence in the sex, and more than a sailor's ordinary fondness for children. To have a 'little darling' of his own, as he called it (in order not to restrict the matter to sex) was his most anxious wish, and his lady was of course aware of this solicitude. I am afraid that Mr Magnis was not quite so liberal of his savings as he might have been during his long voyages, when his wife may well have expected many little comforts to make up as much as possible for her lord's absence. Perhaps he only waited until, according to his peculiar views, she should deserve them, but certainly upon receiving, while at sea, a cheerful intimation from Mrs M. that there was a probability of his often-expressed desire being shortly gratified, he sent her home no less a sum than three hundred pounds, with a particular charge that the infant should be 'well rigged out,' and want for nothing; 'if a boy,' adds he, with modesty, 'so much the better.' There is surely a pathos about this simple-minded sailor, given up to domestic affection, notwithstanding that the object of it has not yet arrived, and showering his gold upon no Danaë, but his own respectable Juno. Mrs M. was eminently respectable, but not devoted to the interests of truth. Notwithstanding the tender hopes held forth in her correspondence, she had in reality no other expectation whatever except that of getting money out of her too confiding husband. No 'little stranger' was really looked for; no pincushion was embroidered with the sacred 'Welcome;' the services of no Mrs Gamp were specially retained. All was moonshine as respected the coming scion of the House of Magnis. In due course, the lady got the money, however, although there was nothing to 'rig out.' Then commenced a still worse course of domestic deception. Mrs M. announces, in joyful strain, to her infatuated husband, that their firstborn has arrived; that it is a magnificent boy, and that she has named him Dick, after his beloved father, whom he greatly resembles. From that moment, Mr Richard Magnis counts the tedious hours—notches them on a stick, perhaps, like Robinson Crusoe, or ties them on his handkerchiefs, so many 'knots an hour,' in sailor-fashion—until he shall come home and embrace his child.

In process of time, to borrow the words of the poet, 'the perils and the dangers of the voyage are past, and the ship is moored in Portsmouth at last, and the happiest of the crew, the happiest of the crew, and the happiest of the crew' is Richard Magnis, senior. When he disembarks at Gosport, however, his wife meets him with evil news. Dick is not at home; he is out at nurse at a considerable distance; change of air having been pronounced essential to that surgical operation, performed by the least professional amongst us for ourselves, called 'cutting his teeth.' Mr Magnis would have journeyed any distance to behold his offspring, but he is informed that an interview would be positively dangerous to the infant, whose nerves are but too likely to be upset by seeing his father for the first time. The leave that the poor sailor has obtained is but short on this occasion, and he returns on board ship with a heart sick with hope deferred. The voyage before him is a very long one, during the whole of which he continues to make the most affectionate inquiries about Dick, and to remit money for his due support; he would be very unhappy, he says, but for the thought of this child: he is buoyed up, as Mr Thomas Hood would have said, by this imaginary infant male. Upon again returning to Gosport, at the expiration of no less than three years, Mrs Magnis endeavours once more to impose



upon his credulity by informing him that the infant, although a remarkably fine boy, has not yet finished cutting those teeth. This, however, is a little too much even for our sailor. He protests that he will either go to his son, wherever he may be, or that his son shall be brought to him. Under the circumstances, Mrs Magnis deems the latter alternative to be the more feasible, and sets out, in person, to fetch this hypothetical boy. It occurs to her that the metropolis is most calculated (by the number and variety it possesses of the goods in question) to supply the article of which she stands in need. It has often been said that there is nothing which cannot be bought in London, and I have little doubt that Mrs M. might have purchased an infant male of the proper age, and required speaking-likeness to her husband (for that is always a matter of opinion), at a very reasonable figure. This lady, however, was either unacquainted with the locality in which such things are to be procured, or she was unwilling to part with the money; at all events, she does not go into the infant-market at all, but *steals* a child.

Passing down St Martin's Lane, she set her eyes on Master Thomas Dellow (the very article in all respects which she wanted), playing with his little sister at 'keeping a shop' in the gutter, established to supply the Public with the freshest dirt-pies, and, by great good-fortune, immediately opposite a green-grocer's stall. Into this establishment Mrs Magnis inveigled the children by promises of apples. Having thus gained their confidence, she proposed to the little girl to have a race to the nearest pastrycook's shop, which the young lady won with ease; but upon turning round to look for her adversary, behold she had distanced her altogether. Mrs Magnis had gone off in another direction with the poor little boy!

Master Dellow's disappearance made an immense sensation in London. Many mothers would never lose sight of their children, even for a moment, in consequence; while a few, on the contrary, encouraged in their offspring a taste for the manufacture of dirt-pies. The officers of the law were extraordinarily active in apprehending the wrong persons, and the green-grocer and his assistants equally prompt in swearing to their identity. At length, however, the bereaved parents received intelligence which took the father down by the next coach to Gosport, and he returned with the missing boy, alive and well. The child had fortunately certain marks about him, which Mrs Magnis, in her very cursory examination of him in St Martin's Lane, had not perceived, and a handbill having been published of his description, inevitably led to his detection; for Magnis *Pere* (as he thought himself) was for ever triumphantly exhibiting the child to all his friends, and doubtless pointing out its blemishes as particular beauties. He had felt the strongest parental affection for the boy (who had also been mightily taken with him, and seemed rather to enjoy the variety in his domestic life than otherwise); and when the imposition was made clearly manifest, the simple sailor was greatly affected at having to part with him. Mrs Magnis herself was committed to Winchester jail, and thereby escaped even the slight punishment at that time awarded for her offence; for being brought to trial at the assizes for Hampshire, her counsel protested against the illegality of her commitment—the offence having been committed in London, and not in Hampshire—and easily procured her acquittal.

A case most remarkably similar to the above occurred in 1815. A poor beggar-woman, with twins, in her arms, and a child of five years old accompanying her, was robbed in open day of one of her twins, by a strange woman, who had offered to carry it under pretence of charity. Indigent as was the mother, and burdened with five other children, she immediately spent all she had in advertisements with a description of the thief, which six weeks afterwards had the

desired effect. Sarah Stone, the offender, was identified on board a ship in the Thames, with the missing child in her arms.

'Oh, let me have a kiss of my baby,' cried the mother, overjoyed at seeing it once more.

But a sailor who was standing by exclaimed: 'No; not if you were the queen of England!' For exactly as in the case of Richard Magnis, he firmly believed it to be his own little daughter (having been imposed upon by his wife in a similar manner), and swore to the same, with great tenacity, at the subsequent trial. In this case, however, the poor baby was not returned in such good condition, and died very shortly after its restitution. The law with respect to child-stealing had, as has been above stated, been rendered more rigorous since the case of Harriet Magnis; and Sarah Stone was sentenced to seven years' transportation.

### PEAKS AND VALLEYS OF THE ANDES.

THE longest, if not the loftiest chain of mountains on the earth's surface, is that of the Cordillera of the Andes, stretching from south to north upwards of eight thousand miles. It commences in the Land of Fire, beyond the Strait of Magellan, and traversed by comparatively few breaks, runs along the western rim of the American continent, through Chili, through Peru, through the Strait of Central America, across the Isthmus of Darien, through Mexico, and dividing into two arms, extends, under the name of the Rocky Mountains, to the fifty-second parallel of north latitude. Here and there in this vast ridge, mighty pinnacles shoot up far beyond the regions of eternal snow, and in sharpness and elevation almost rival the peaks of the Himalaya. Language, with all its resources, is unable to do justice to the stupendous grandeur of these mountains which soar far above the clouds, and, unvisited by man or any other living creature save the condor, glitter amid the blue heavens in eternal solitude and serenity. In some parts of its course, the Cordillera is contracted into one narrow sierra, cleaving the atmosphere with its sharp teeth like a saw; elsewhere it separates into several chains, expanding east and west, and enclosing whole provinces in its embrace. Farther towards the north, it again heaps up its rocks into one giddy ridge, and hurling down countless streams from its sides, penetrates the boreal hemisphere, and only abates its magnificence on the confines of the British territory, where the trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company chase the fur-bearing animals over plains glittering with snow.

Nature nowhere exhibits wilder freaks or more startling contrasts than in the Andes. Here and there, at irregular distances, we meet with transverse gaps on which the natives bestow the name of Quebradas, in some cases walled on both sides by perpendicular precipices, upwards of seven thousand feet in depth. Through one of these quebradas, extending from ocean to ocean, rolls the sea, which forms the Strait of Magellan; the other quebradas are mere valleys, always, however, containing the streams which scooped them out of the bulk of the mountain, and still deepen their bed by gnawing and bearing away incessantly to the ocean particles of the underlying rock. From a ledge overhanging one of these prodigious valleys in the neighbourhood of Cuzco, you may enjoy a prospect scarcely to be equalled anywhere else on the globe. To the left rise the Andes into the clear blue sky; to the right, the mountains descend gradually in mighty terraces to the plain, which is laved in the extreme distance by the shining waters of the Pacific; the valley itself, black, and to appearance fathomless, yawns at your feet, making your head giddy as you gaze at it, till you behold a white fleck rising out of the gulf, and expanding as it mounts, till the condor's wings, almost twenty feet in spread, glitter before your eyes in the

sun, as the proud bird wheels and soars fearlessly over the dizzy chasm, and then ascending above your head, penetrates the empyrean, beyond the reach of sight. Above and below this ledge, upon a zigzag track running along the edge of the precipice, you often perceive strings of llamas and alpacas, heavily laden, and led or driven by aboriginal Indians, with red skins and shrunken figures.

In breaks and recesses of the rock you notice, as you pursue your upward way, ancient idols of the Peruvians reposing beneath neatly-carved stone canopies, or pretty chapels to Our Lady of Cuzco, who has found worshippers in these solitudes, which remind the traveller of those mountainous regions of Asia, where the Madonna became a mother. One of the most marvellous phenomena connected with the Andes is witnessed in Peru, the heat on whose low plains would be insufferable but for a dense canopy of clouds, which, like the awning of a mighty Roman theatre, extends all day, from the Cordillera to the Pacific, completely intercepting the rays of the sun, and rendering the air beneath it cool and pleasant. But for this extraordinary contrivance of nature, Lima and its vicinity would be altogether uninhabitable. As might have been expected, the strangest climatic contrasts are found in the Cordillera and its valleys, where, in the course of seven or eight hours, you may pass from districts scorched by tropical heat, through meadows sprinkled with vernal flowers, through orchards laden with autumnal fruit, to eminences enveloped in all the rigours of a Lapland winter. In performing this short journey, the traveller often experiences very strange and painful sensations, among which are those of the mountain malady, which in all its symptoms is identical with sea-sickness, the patient being completely prostrated, and undergoing all the pains and disturbances of the stomach which the unaccustomed voyager feels. Great rivers generally imply great mountains towards their sources. Thus, the Indus and the Brahmaputra take their rise from springs in the vast elevated table-land of Central Asia, lying north of the Kailas mountains; the Ganges rushes down from the southern face of the Himalaya; the Nile conceals its head amid the sinuosities of the back-bone of Africa; while the Rio de la Plata, the Orinoco, and the Orono, or River of the Amazons, owe their birth to the Cordillera of the Andes, whence their course to the sea measures between three and four thousand miles.

If a balloon could be made to pass over this prodigious chain, so as to enable the aerial voyager to study and note down the peculiarities of the outspread scene beneath, we may safely maintain that nothing more marvellous could be presented to the imagination. In glens and rocky chalcies the Andes hold up their pure and perennial waters to the heavens in diminutive tars, tanks, and lakes, which, overflowing and splashing incessantly over crags and glaciers, unite as they flow into brooks, streamlets, and rivers, overshadowed by colossal vegetation, leaping in wild cataracts down precipices of unmeasured height, and then rolling forth through hollows into the open plain, where they irrigate and fertilise to rankness the face of a whole continent. Here were the cradles of those strange empires, Mexico and Peru, which, blighted in their budding civilisation, but embalmed in golden memories, still rank among the most extraordinary historical enigmas on record. Here fierce and sanguinary warriors from the Old World achieved deeds of heroism, and perpetrated crimes of unparalleled atrocity; and here the remnants of races, which neither physiologists nor philosophers comprehend, are still supposed to preserve, locked up in their breasts, traditions of the mighty nations from which they are descended.

Nothing can be more singular than the ethnological

distribution of these fragments of races over the eastern and western slopes of the Cordillera, for the most part enslaved, but in some few cases independent, especially in those primeval forests which back and flank the empire of Brazil, and clothe the acclivities of the Andes with trees of gigantic growth. In these wildernesses roam the puma and the jaguar, the wild llama and the alpaca, and the huge and fiery bison, which, in other parts of the continent, congregated in armies of thousands, charges, so to speak, through the passes of the Cordillera, on its way from the levels of one ocean to the other, while man, in migratory hordes, follows in its track.

Very remarkable phenomena have been noticed in connection with the Andes. On Fremont's Peak, the highest pinnacle of the Rocky Mountains, the American travellers found a swarm of bees, while butterflies have been seen on the Andes of Peru considerably above the line of eternal snow. To account for these facts, naturalists imagine the insects to have been borne involuntarily to those heights by ascending currents of air, but such mechanical theories, instead of explaining the irregularities of nature, merely check investigation for the moment, but are soon found to be unsatisfactory by the mind. It is more philosophical to assume that both bees and butterflies were tempted by some sensations of pleasure to forsake the common level of the globe, and sport beyond the ordinary resorts of man. Perhaps, also, the glittering surface of the Pacific allured those frail insects which fell upon the deck of the ship in which the Prussian philosopher sailed from America.

Already we have alluded to the lofty flight of the condor, which may truly be said to constitute the great living wonder of the Cordillera. For reasons hitherto undiscovered, this immense and powerful bird is never found beyond the equator towards the north, though southwards it extends its empire through clouds and storms to the Strait of Magellan. No exact estimate can be formed of the height to which the condor ascends into the air, but it unquestionably floats aloft far beyond the highest projections of the globe, where, according to generally received opinions, the act of breathing is impossible, at least to man. But such ideas are gradually giving way before the light of experience. Men have ascended in balloons full six miles above the level of the sea, and, when strong and robust, found their lungs very little affected. Again, in mountainous regions, English travellers have attained to elevations at which the air was previously supposed to be too subtle for respiration. We must, therefore, attribute to other causes the painful sensations felt by explorers in the Andes. At whatever conclusion we may arrive on this point with respect to man, it is certain that the condor finds it practicable to breathe miles above the apex of Chimborazo, since, to a keen-sighted observer, looking upwards from the level of perpetual snow, it has soared into the ether, till, after looking for a while like a dark speck, it has disappeared and been lost altogether in the blue of the firmament. If the condor could write, what glowing and brilliant descriptions might it not give of the landscapes spread out before it at such moments when the diameter of its horizon must have exceeded a thousand miles! How long it remains thus buried in the heavens must depend partly on its strength of wing, partly on its power of abstinence, which is so great that it is said, in captivity, to live forty days without food, though in a state of liberty its voraciousness is believed to exceed that of all other animals, not excepting even the vulture. In point of taste, also, it is anything but choice, preferring to fresh meat such carrion as is found to be in a state of extreme decomposition. Throughout the South American states, from the equator to the utmost limits of Chili, the husbandmen carry on an

internecine war with this bird, which preys eagerly on their flocks and their children, and is mercilessly shot or knocked on the head whenever an opportunity offers.

Were it not, however, for its greediness, the condor would seldom become the farmer's prey. It might pounce upon a young vicuña or llama, it might carry off a lamb or a baby to its inaccessible eyrie in the Cordillera, without affording the marksman the chance of a shot, so swift is its wing, so sudden and instantaneous its sweep. But thoroughly enslaved by its appetite, it becomes, when there is a feast before it, less alive to consequences than an alderman. Scarcely looking to the right hand or the left, it tears and gorges as long as there is a square quarter of an inch in its stomach unfilled; and when it has dined, it is so heavy that it is utterly unable to mount till it has taken a pretty long run to gather air into its wings. Aware of its stupendous gluttony, the farmers kill an ox, and surround the carcass with a small enclosure of lofty palisades. The condors soon scent the bait, and descend in flights into the trap, where they tug, and scream, and swallow, till they are judged to be in a state ripe for death or slavery. Having no space for their preliminary run, they cannot rise from between the palisades, and so they are either brained with clubs or caught by the lasso, and retained in captivity, though for what purpose is not stated, unless it be to afford their captors the pleasure of beholding them gaze at the peaks of the Cordillera in vain. An anecdote is told of a farmer in Peru, who paid a heavy penalty for his cruelty to the condor. The bird, having his wings clipped, remained sullenly about the house, now and then devouring a lamb or a kid. Gradually the old feathers moulted, and new ones came and grew, till the condor felt his strength return to him; and, seizing upon a young child, the favourite of its father, swept round the farm-yard, and spreading forth its vast wings, spurned the ground, and soared aloft with its victim in sight of the whole family.

Properly speaking, the gaps or quebradas are not valleys, but deep clefts in the mountains or tablelands made by streams, which, eating away the rock where it is softest, make themselves a serpentine channel, and at first cover the whole bed from cliff to cliff. In some cases, the common road to the villages of the Upper Andes lies through these quebradas, whose bottom is completely covered with water. In other instances, the perpendicular sides of the gap beaten upon by rain-storms, cracked and split by frost, or crumbled away by the sun's rays, present to the eye a mere sloping surface, occasionally covered with vegetation. In the course of ages, the torrents, running now on one side, now on the other, eat away the rocks, and widen the bottom of the quebrada, in which trees and plants soon spring up, fringe the banks of the streams, and by rendering them firm with their intertwisted roots, confine the waters to a fixed channel. Man then steps in to profit by the arrangements of nature, and lays out these warm and lovely valleys in gardens, orchards, vineyards, and cornfields; builds villages, spans the rivulets with bridges, and imparts to the whole scene an air of cultivation and beauty. At the distance of a few leagues up the mountains, nothing will grow but potatoes—even oats refusing to bear grain; while at the bottom of these gaps, not only do barley and wheat arrive at perfection, but even maize, which requires much greater warmth than wheat. In ascending from the vast plains or pampas which extend from the borders of the Atlantic to the Andes, you observe extraordinary changes in the character of the natural vegetation; trees of great elevation and immense bulk clothe the lower terraces, and are closely laced together by a net-work of creeping plants, which throw their flexible arms from bough to bough, and being covered with flowers of every variety of tint, impart to the woods the aspect of one

huge garland, belting round the foot of the mountain. Gradually, as greater elevations are attained, the palms, the cedars, the oaks, and other trees exhibit less gigantic dimensions, and diminishing perpetually in proportion to the greater altitude in which they are found, dwindle, in the neighbourhood of everlasting snow, to stunted bushes, which, in the hottest season of the year, only put forth a few half-withered leaves. Mosses, lichens, and a few hardy creeping plants, may be said to carry on the flag of vegetation a little further into the enemy's country; but at length the intense cold puts a stop to all growth, and there remains nothing but bare rock, which, like an eternal framework, supports the snowy mantle of the Cordillera, and here and there throws up its sinuous folds into the azure empyrean.

The opinion, it is well known, prevails, that these enormous ridges, which are believed to attain, in some cases, the height of twenty-five thousand feet above the level of the sea, are filled internally with costly metals and minerals—gold, silver, copper—which, sending forth exhalations through the overlying crust, affect and deteriorate the atmosphere. This may in part be inferred from the state in which we find the waters of the great lake of Titicaca in the province of Cuzco, which are brackish and bitter, like those of Lake Meis in Africa. The prodigious masses, however, of metalliferous rocks, which appear to compose so large a portion of the Cordillera, will then only be worked when the institutions of the subjacent countries shall have given a proper development to civilisation. At present, nature's mighty laboratory carries on its operations in vain, though, if properly turned to account, it might be found sufficiently extensive and prolific to flood the whole world with gold. Already it has been discovered that nearly all the extremities and spurs of the chain abound with the precious metals, and in some parts with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, so that the imagination is fully justified in representing to itself exhaustless veins of gold and silver, endless nests of jewels, laid up under the eternal snows, to stimulate and reward the industry of future generations.

On many of the declivities of the Andes, forests are found so extensive, that it takes a hardy and active traveller twelve or fifteen days to traverse them, and so destitute of inhabitants, that during all that time he perceives not a single hut or trace of human habitation. The track narrows in parts to the breadth of a single foot, and runs sometimes between perpendicular rocks, sometimes between matted and gigantic trees, at the foot of which the jaguar makes his lair, and serpents of prodigious length and thickness coil and swelter in the moist and poisonous heat. Nature left to herself, runs riot in deformity, producing multitudes of loathsome reptiles, alligators, tortoises, huge and bloated toads, spiders, scorpions, centipedes, and every kind of disgusting and repulsive insect. Among the various forms of life with which these noisome wildernesses are peopled, none is more remarkable than the voracious travelling ant, which reproduces on the American continent the startling phenomena displayed by the locusts in Western Asia. This ant is considerably larger than the common species, and exists in swarms so prodigious, that if it had been emboldened by nature to attack man, the whole of the countries in which it appears would have been uninhabitable. But it withholds its devastating force from the lord of the creation, and precipitates itself in countless myriads upon the whole reptile world, upon serpents the most venomous, as the corales, the cascabeles, or serpents with two heads, the fejuquillos and others, and very soon leaves nothing on the earth but their blanched bones. Asiatic travellers on the great plains extending from those of the Decapolis to Palmyra, have witnessed, with amazement and terror, the breaking in of the locusts from the desert. Advancing before



the south wind in dense clouds, they blacken the whole earth, and unlike the American ants, spare neither man nor beast. Before them, in the language of the Arabs, the earth is green and lovely as paradise; behind them it is a howling wilderness, a skeleton strip of its integuments, bare and blanching in the sun. The hum they make is like that of a mighty army foraging at night. They lock together their shield-like wings, they swim the rivers, they devour the grass of the field, they climb the trees of the forest, and leave behind them nothing but the naked trunk and boughs; they enter towns and cities, and clear them of everything eatable or living they contain. Nothing arrests their progress but fire, and therefore when their approach is discovered from a distance, a terrible conflagration is opposed to their advance—a column of flame runs suddenly along the frontier, and fed by green wood and plants, diffuses so acrid a smoke, that even the locusts shrink from encountering it, and turn back towards the desert.

In South America, the ants are looked upon by the inhabitants rather as allies and friends than as enemies. Naturalists persuade themselves that these little warriors discover by the smell those parts of the continent in which venomous reptiles most abound, and pursue their march in that direction. No pains appear to have been bestowed upon the discovery of their breeding-places, which therefore, like those of the Arabian locusts, remain still to be explored. However, when they put their stupendous columns in motion, the noise they make in climbing trees, and passing over dried grass and withered leaves, is so great, that it gives timely warning to the natives to escape from their houses. The serpents, scorpions, lizards, toads, likewise take the alarm, and endeavour to flee; but in vain, for the ants are nimble in their motions, and infallibly overtake them, whether they ascend into the loftiest trees, or dive for safety into the deepest cavities of rocks. No retreat suffices for their protection, no efforts or writhings of the huge serpents dismay the ants, which, falling upon their prey in millions, devour them alive. No sight can be more shocking than that of a vast cascabello enveloped by a cloud of ants; it rears its double head, it froths forth venom from its mouth, it lashes the ground, it glares fiercely with its blood-red eyes, it rears in agonising undulations, it crushes the foe by myriads, but to no purpose; they dart into its open mouth, into its eyes; they sever its skin with their sharp teeth, and eat while it tosses and flounders about, till exhausted and subdued, it lies palpitating upon the earth, to have its bones picked clean in parts even before life is extinct.

When the ant enters a house, which it does in search of vermin, it penetrates into every crevice and corner, and only leaves it when it has been made much cleaner than by the broom of the most active housemaid. After the passage of these swarms, which the natives call *chacos*, the inhabitants are free from reptiles and vermin for several months, till heat and moisture once more quicken into life the seeds of the venomous creation.

#### OUR CAMPAIGN AT LIVINGSTONE.

JERRY CLIP, the facetious barber in *The Widow's Victim*, observes, that theatrical *sharing* speculations are 'fair-built castles that never *fritz*; you get nothing a-week, and find your own jewellery.' And Jerry was tolerably near the mark; they seldom are successful. Having been connected with several, I speak from experience, and can call to mind but two that were paying concerns. The one I am going to describe was in Northumberland. Eleven years ago, in the height of summer—a time when there is very little doing in the theatrical world—my husband received a letter, which I transcribe from memory: 'FRIEND JOHN' (I never can understand why, but

many of our professional correspondents commence their epistles in this Quaker-like manner), 'I can offer you and your good lady a berth for the next three months at Livingstone, to open there on Saturday. I have excellent scenery, showy wardrobe, but no ready cash to venture; therefore, we must go on the sharing system—your wife, as leading-lady, to have an extra half-share (our leading-gent, same terms)—and you may reckon on making a benefit with your comic singing. Livingstone has a population of ten thousand; and at present, there is nothing going on in the way of public amusements. The theatre is a wooden building.—Yours truly, WM. SMITHSON.'

We had no great hopes of the 'sharing system,' yet, on the half-a-loaf-better-than-no-bread principle, we accepted the offer. As we neared our place of destination, our ears were assailed by a terrific noise, resembling the barking of a thousand bull-dogs in chorus: it was the hoarse roar of the blast-furnaces belonging to extensive ironworks, a mile beyond Livingstone; a little nearer, and we saw their huge tongues of flame glaring through the darkness. Mr Smithson received us warmly, and had provided tea for us at the inn where the coach stopped; but excused himself for running away abruptly, as he had a great deal to do yet before the theatre would be ready for opening—there was scenery to hang, dressing-gowns to fit up, wardrobe to unpack and air, check-takers to hire, playbills to distribute, and so forth. After tea, the landlord directed us to the 'Beehive,' kept by a person who, he thought, might spare us a room, or perhaps two. We found the house, after great trouble; sounds of drunken merriment, and the dim light of a half-penny candle in one of the windows, at last serving as guides to our uncertain footsteps. A clumsy, sleepy, slipshod girl appeared, and told us that her mistress was absent from home: she ushered us into a front-parlour—where, notwithstanding the sultriness of the night, there was a blazing fire—and sent her master to us. He seemed uncommonly stupid, but was civil; shewed us the only vacant bedroom in the house; ordered Dorothy to make us a fire, which we declined having; and wished us good-night.

The children, tired out, soon slept soundly; but the roaring of the 'bull-dogs,' and the racket kept up by the Beehive's inebriated customers, effectually banished sleep from my eyelids. Towards eight next morning, I arose, weary and unrefreshed. Down stairs, everything was in disorder—the kitchen floor and tables deluged with beer and spirits; broken glasses, mugs, and tobacco-pipes strewn about in all directions; the fireplace miserably dirty, a heap of ashes having accumulated until it had run over the fender, and spread into the middle of the room; and to complete the uncomfortable appearance of things, there were four or five men asleep and snoring—some lying on benches, others seated—their arms folded on sloppy tables, serving as pillows. The suffocating fumes of liquor and tobacco drove me to the open street-door, for a little fresh air; the landlord was outside in his shirt-sleeves, taking down the parlour shutters, and was so surprised at sight of me, that he narrowly missed dropping them on his toes. He returned my 'good-morning' civilly enough, but begged to know who I was, and how I got into the house, the gate of the back-yard being bolted. An explanation ensued, when he confessed that he was so 'fresh' on the preceding night, that he had not the slightest recollection of having let the lodgings, nor was he conscious of having seen me or my husband and family. Now that the man was sober, he was rather intelligent than otherwise, although, to my unaccustomed ears, his Northumbrian burr was unpleasant, and nearly as difficult to understand as a foreign language. At some expense of time and patience, I contrived to ascertain that 'Dawathy' had just gone to bed, having sat up all night to attend

to the customers, whilst he himself had 'wetiand' to 'west' at one o'clock; that there was no chance of 'bweekfast' till the 'watah'-cart came 'wound' at ten o'clock; but that if we could 'dwink stwong beeah,' he had plenty, as good as 'evah was bwowed.' Lady Macbeth says: 'Things without all remedy should be without regard,' and I agree with her; so I endeavoured to stave off the thoughts of breakfast until the arrival of water. About half-past ten, a lame Irish boy brought it, in a huge barrel, drawn about in a donkey-cart. Twenty-five bucketfuls did our landlord purchase, for which he paid a shilling. He said that on very busy days it sometimes cost him from eighteenpence to two shillings for a supply of the pure element, and that there never was a quart in the house of a morning until Micky came his 'wounds.' Milk was not to be had at any price.

Before rehearsal, we took a ramble. The town was very ugly, and bore the appearance of having been put together in a hurry. First, we came to four or five large shops, with two good windows apiece; then a row of rickety cabins, whose wares were chiefly heaped up outside, on rough benches, or on planks supported by trestles; fixtures, even in the best establishments, were scarce. There was a lavish supply of food and clothing, not displayed in an attractive manner, but squandered about in a careless, untidy sort of way: a load of potatoes here, on the floor; hearthstones and pipe-clay there; salt herrings in one corner; a sugar hogshead, full of cheap slippers, in another; in the windows, a disorderly spread of fruits, cooked meat, soap, nuts, pipes and cigars, frying-pans, babies' socks, women's dress-caps, earthenware, common jewellery, and a hundred other equally incongruous articles, not neatly arranged and exhibited, but lumped up, in a higgledy-piggledy fashion, and looking very much as if some one had thrown them there at haphazard from the other end of the shops. Stationery was not plentiful, the postmaster being the sole dealer in it; he sold vile note-paper at a half-penny per sheet, and was astonished at our wanting to purchase a whole quire. The money-order office was two miles off, at Pikelly Beck. With a population of many thousands, there was no bookseller, nor were any periodicals to be bought in the town. The two principal innkeepers took in the Newcastle papers; a sporting barber subscribed to *Bell's Life*, and gave his customers the privilege of perusing it; and this was about the extent of the literary doings. There were printers in a city twelve miles off, but there was no public conveyance thither; therefore there was no available printer nearer than the town fifteen miles away which we had left by coach the day before.

There were dozens of public-houses and beer-shops, but not a single school—except one built by the Iron Works Company, solely for the children of their 'hands'—no circulating library, no mechanics' institute, no public hall or assembly-room of any description, no church, no chapel, and no meeting-house!

Between Livingstone and the Works were several rows of cottages belonging to the Company, and erected expressly for their men. In front of these dwellings were faint attempts at gardens; they were fenced with coarse, rough slabs of unplanned wood, instead of palings; flowers refused to grow in the narrow borders; and the grass-plots, parched, bare, and dusty, were of a faded, scorched-up, yellow hue. Still, the little unsightly enclosures had their use. Here, pig-sties, rabbit-hutches, and pigeon-houses of the rough-and-ready style of construction, flourished; here was a safe nursery for the children, and a drying-ground for the family linen. Rough, snarley, wiry-haired dogs were numerous; and hanging over every door was a canary, a linnet, or a jackdaw, in a cage of homely architecture. The houses were all furnished after one pattern. Opposite the open door stood a huge, handsomely carved four-post bed-

stead, with white drapery and counterpane; between bed and door, on a mahogany table, stood a swing looking-glass, surrounded by decanters, wine-glasses, salt-cellar, and china ornaments; above the table, an American clock was fixed, on a shelf, displaying more crystal and chinaware; and an elaborately carved mahogany or cherry wood case, with glass front, exhibited a smartly dressed doll, or a number of mineralogical specimens. The windows, without exception, were garnished with a profusion of white drapery, edged with cheap lace. Highly coloured pictures of the trashiest kind abounded; such as the 'Marriage of the Princess Charlotte,' the 'Escape from Lochleven,' 'Flora and her Pups,' varied, in the houses of the Roman Catholics, by vile daubs, supposed to represent their favourite saints.

Livingstone stands on a barren plain at the summit of a hill; there being no trees, the heat by mid-day was intolerable. On our way, we had kept a look-out for the theatre, but had missed it; and no wonder, for it was built behind a public-house, that entirely hid it. Conducted by a small boy, we retraced our steps as far as the 'Miners' Arms,' and went through the house to the Thespian temple, which stood on a space of unenclosed ground in the rear, the publican making no charge for ground-rent, in the expectation of reaping a good harvest from the additional influx of visitors it would bring to his premises. Mr Smithson had been obliged to cover the wooden building with a canvas top, all the slaters being employed at work which they could not leave; but he comforted us with the assurance that we should find the canvas cooler than slates would have been. After rehearsal, it was easy to see that the 'pay' had taken place; the shopkeepers were as busy as bees; an auctioneer was selling furniture on one side of the street, a Cheap John haranguing the crowd on the other; several Scotchmen—as all travelling-drapers, no matter of what country, were called—were going their rounds; and there was a perfect swarm of dealers, with baskets of small-wares, toys, sausages, sweets, and gingerbread. More than one nut-seller had a 'whirley tommy,' where those who were inclined 'tried their luck' for nuts; and the 'toss-or-buy' piemen were driving a roaring trade, 'tossing' being apparently the rule, and 'buying' the exception. The workmen and their families were much addicted to games of chance, and greatly encouraged thereto by the publicans, who were continually getting up raffles for sets of china, gown-pieces, silk handkerchiefs, &c.—owner and winner each spending a fixed sum for the good of the house, in addition to whatever else might be disbursed on those occasions. There was no lack of amusement either: there was a band of Sable Harmonists, in red and blue striped shirts, straw-hats, and nankeen trousers; likewise we encountered two haggard, spiritless, infant stilt-walkers, scantily clad in garments of blue leno and weather-beaten spangles. Crowds of boys were playing at pitch-and-toss—I am sorry to say, swearing vehemently—two or three quoiting-matches were going on, the losers paying in beer, and not in cash.

Our landlady had returned during our absence; the servant was up, and had washed the kitchen, sanded the floor, scoured the tables, and polished the grate. The habitual frequenters of the 'Beehive,' considerably smartened up—their 'custom always' of a Saturday afternoon—were literally rubbing off their 'chalks,' for neither our landlord nor his wife could read or write, and how they contrived to keep their fortnightly accounts puzzled me; only I observed, that as the 'big pay' drew near, every inch of wall in the bar that could be spared for that purpose was covered with hieroglyphics in chalk. According as the debtors paid up, these rapidly disappeared, and ready cash and clean walls were the order of the day until the following Tuesday, when there was a renewal of the credit system.

The theatre was calculated to afford comfortable accommodation to about a thousand grown-up spectators; on the opening-night, our audience numbered fourteen hundred persons, a third part of whom were boys, three occupying the same amount of space as two men would. We had not expected much refinement amongst them, but were totally unprepared for the hideous din that prevailed from the moment that the doors were opened, and they began to rush in pell-mell, until the overture commenced.

The whistling, singing, and strong language—but all in good-fellowship—the talking in Gaelic, Erse, and English, in every dialect of the last from Northumbrian to Cornish, made up a second Babel. As soon as the musicians struck up, the audience were quiet, and were wonderfully attentive whilst we performed *Alonzo the Brave*, and *Jack Robinson and his Monkey*, bestowing their applause very liberally, especially on the ghost of the Fair Imogene, the monkey, and the comic singer; him they encored, in their peculiar fashion, by shouting 'Back! Back!' until he responded to their call, and gave them the song of *The Doctor's Boy*, with which charming ditty one man was so pleased, that he clambered from the pit to the stage with a bottle of rum, and was so disgusted at the singer's declining to 'sup' with him, that he smashed the bottle to pieces on the rail at the back of the orchestra.

During the season, these audiences made no scruple of encoring anything that pleased them, whether song, combat, soliloquy, or dialogue, any more than the Haymarket audience hesitate in their nightly encore of Lord Dundreary's reading Brother Sam's letter. The heat was to us almost insupportable; but our hearers, being nearly all puddlers, shinglers, and others employed about the blast-furnaces, cared no more for it than if they had been salamanders; and whenever the 'screen'—namely, the act-drop—was down, they got up a chorus, or a friendly fight, to amuse themselves; so we took the hint, and made the intervals between the acts as brief as possible. Singing and acting we found very hard work, for nearly every man and boy present smoked, and no entreaty on the part of the manager had power to abate the nuisance, so that we were well-nigh choked.

On the Sunday morning, the town was pretty quiet, the Roman Catholic inhabitants attending mass at their chapel, a mile and a half distant from Livingstone, whilst those of other religious denominations, as well as hundreds of no religion at all, did not emerge from their habitations before dinner; but in the afternoon and evening, the populace lived out of doors, and entertained themselves with foot-races, cock-fights, and other unsabbatarian recreations, out of which arose a good deal of noisy gambling and disgraceful language. The public-houses were not professedly open, yet customers were alily admitted, and long before the legal hour for liquor-traffic, there were dozens of drunken men to be seen; even the very individuals who had been scrupulously particular in going to their 'duty' in the early part of the day were now staggering about. Pugilistic encounters sprang up on the slenderest provocation—from our windows we once saw four desperate fights going on simultaneously—women coaxing, scolding, crying (their interference being greatly to the detriment of their apparel in general, and their headgear in particular), terrified children screaming amain, and riotous bystanders encouraging with words and liquor the hot-headed champions of their respective parties, made altogether a frightful racket. Our landlord informed us that these 'bits of shindies' invariably took their rise from some difference in the disputants' place of birth, or variety of opinion on religious subjects, and that when the men were 'a twifle slewed,' the Irish and Scotch fought for mastery, as likewise the Welsh and Cornish, and that Sundays were appointed by common consent for settling their grievances; a Livingstonian dispute resembled a

Corsican vendetta; if you offended one member of a family, one individual of a party, you offended everybody to whom that person was in the most remote degree related by blood or marriage, or between whom there were any ties of friendship. One poor fellow, who was led from the field of battle with his head cut and bleeding, and eyes so swollen that he could no longer see to plant a blow, cried out, as he went reluctantly away: 'Miley Rafferty, go an' wid the fight, an' I'll be a quart of sperrets to the two av yiz [meaning his deputy and his antagonist]; an' I bet a gallon to a pint [beer implied] I'll lick him into fits next Sunday, wid God's blessin', whin I'm my own man' [sober]. With this 'rabble rout,' the police, four in number, had no chance, and wisely they kept aloof.

On the Monday morning, our bill-deliverer complained that, in nine cases out of ten, when he had given out a bill, its uneducated recipient had obliged him to stop and read it. At this rate, he said that he should not be able to bill the town in less than nine or ten hours, and suggested that bill-boards, placed in the most conspicuous places, would be a decided improvement. This suggestion the manager readily adopted, and a dozen bill-boards were quickly made; the property-man lettered them every day, with merely the names of the pieces, in good, large, easily-read capitals; and once a week our scenic artist ornamented them with a sketch from any drama that occurred to him at the moment, without reference to the performance current, such as the meeting of Valentine and Orson, or Eliza's escape across the ice. To give further publicity to our proceedings, the musicians, seated in a cart, played round the town, accompanied by one of the actors, to announce the approaching evening's entertainments, a halt being made for that purpose in the vicinity of the principal public-houses, their tenants generally treating the *paraders* to 'lowance'; and this method, though less genteel than the customary one of distributing programmes, proved far more efficacious.

Mr Smithson, anxious that an occasional tragedy should be performed in order to display his spangled, bugled, and gold-lace-trimmed wardrobe, had selected *Romeo and Juliet* for our first Monday. Judging from the impatient and uninformed character of our audience, that they would hardly tolerate its five long-winded acts, we agreed among ourselves to omit much of the quiet, plain-sailing dialogue; to cut down the sentimental love-scenes; to allow Peter and the Nurse to be as funny, and to 'gag' as long as they chose, and to relieve the heaviness of the last scene by the introduction of a slashing broadsword combat between Romeo and the 'man o' wax.' On this occasion, 'whacks' would have been a better reading, as, instead of the ordinary genteel walking-gentleman to personate the rival lover, our count had been chosen with reference to his qualities as a combatant. The house was an overflowing one; each shiny dress was received in succession with loud acclamation, and the play went on swimmingly till Friar Lawrence entered, when he was saluted with yells and groans. Unable to command a hearing, he left the stage amazed and indignant. The manager went on, and requested to know the cause of the tumult. A hundred voices were at once uplifted to explain, that the monkish garb, the rosary and cross worn as the friar, had constituted the actor's offence. This was easily rectified; he donned the robe and turban destined for Othello, and on his re-appearance, this change of costume was greeted with cheers of approval. In the concluding scene, we came to another knot in the wood. My Romeo and I were defunct, according to Shakespeare, but a new version was insisted on; it was evident that, to gratify our patrons, our trials must terminate happily. To effect this, we recovered; poison and dagger failed to slay us; the Capuletti came on and blessed us in dumb-



show as we knelt, hand in hand, before them; the remaining characters filled up the back of the stage, and the curtain descended, amidst thunders of applause, to the chorus of

Happy pair,  
Happy pair,  
Hymn take you to his care.

We had learned a lesson, and thenceforth, when we played tragedy, shortened it, as in the foregoing instance. The Hamlet of the company grumbled and fretted at being obliged to cut out the greater portion of his beautiful soliloquies, and vented his spite by being as jocose at Ophelia's burial as the gravedigger himself; among other untragic vagaries, propounding to him a lot of *nigger* conundrums, a proceeding relished more by the spectators than by the low comedian. Our tragedy wound up with the melancholy Dane's taking possession of the vacant throne, amidst a flourish of trumpets and fiddles, to the 'general joy' of all Denmark, that 'warlike state' being represented by Horatio, Osric, two ladies in white muslin, and the Livingstonian audience. After this ruthless fashion, we murdered many of Shakspeare's best plays; Fechter himself, with all his alterations and omissions, has not departed more from the original text than we did.

Our usual order of business was tragedy and farce on Mondays; drama and farce on each of the three ensuing evenings; no performance on Fridays, because the workmen were busy all night at the furnaces, and the trades-folk and colliers were not likely to muster in such force as to make it worth our while to act; on Saturday, we treated our supporters to a red-hot melodrama, not remarkable for brilliancy of dialogue, or probability of incident, but representing at least one good murder, plenty of 'hairbreadth 'scapes,' ghostly appearances, downfalls of tyrants, and triumphs of innocence. To the melodrama succeeded some nautical piece, where the true British tar—always a favourite with the working-classes—was to be seen in all his glory, frequently 'yard-arm to yard-arm' with four or five 'black-muzzled pirates,' whom he was sure 'to rake fore and aft,' or drinking grog, or singing *The Sea*, or dancing a hornpipe, or rescuing 'tight little crafts' from tyrannical 'land-lubbers,' all the while rolling about as if he could not find his 'shore-legs,' hitching up his waistband at every opportunity, and, above all things, taking special care to be constantly provided with a quid, ready to fire off at a long-range, into the 'daylights' of 'piratical swabs' and 'furrin' warmint.'

This species of entertainment, varied sometimes by Scotch or Irish dramas, exactly hit the taste of our patrons; *Uncle Tom, Children in the Wood*, and any other pieces wherein my youngsters made their appearance, greatly delighted them, and not a few of them came night after night, for the express purpose of hearing my husband's comic songs, that they might commit the words and tunes to memory. Fortunately for our comfort under the canvas roof, the weather, for the first fortnight of our campaign, was favourable. On the second Saturday, however, it was far otherwise: we were enacting *Carlmilhan*; the doomed spirits of the drowned crew—supposed to have existed at the bottom of the sea for above a century—were all lying, side by side, in long white gowns, dishevelled hair, and pale faces, ready for the opening tableau of the second act; the property-man, with his sheet of iron and can of rosin, was making preparations for producing a mock-tempest, when such a furious storm of real thunder and lightning burst forth as caused him to suspend his mimic operations; nor could the actors, hearkening to that 'mighty herald, earth-accredited of heaven,' find nerve to continue their performance. The audience, unmoved by the 'war of elements,' loudly demanded the rest of the *concert*—by which title

every entertainment is known in that district. With considerable difficulty, they were persuaded to leave, pacified by a promise that the remainder of *Carlmilhan* should be given on the following Monday, in addition to the intended performance, and 'no extra charge made.' Hurriedly we dragged on our street-garments over our stage-dresses, and made our escape, but not before a heavy rain had penetrated the tilt, and wetted wardrobe, scenery, and stage. We got home, drenched to the skin, and ankle-deep in mud. The house was a new one, but so slightly built that we found our bedroom floor covered with pools of water. As luck would have it, the children's bed stood in the only dry corner; but the rain had rendered our own beds totally unfit to occupy; so we exchanged our soaked garments for dry ones; and, as every upstairs room was in like condition with our own, we took our landlady's advice, which was, that we should sleep in arm-chairs by the parlour fire.

In the hope of humanising our audience, a few regulations were put in force, that had certainly a beneficial effect. Persons palpably intoxicated were refused admittance; no liquors (if observed) were allowed to be brought into the theatre. This rule put a stop to the custom of introducing large stone bottles of spirits. Pocket-flasks it was impossible to banish. Boys under fourteen years of age were forbidden to smoke, under penalty of being expelled the house, a law that did much towards mitigating the choking annoyance that we were nightly subject to. With a view to our patrons' edification, we played *The Bottle, The Drunkard's Children*, and some other dramas of that description; and the very men who were in the habit of spending half their large earnings in public-houses would 'applaud to the echo' the teetotal sentiments with which they abound. We had reason to believe, too, that the representation of the miseries entailed by drunkenness actually had some beneficial influence on their conduct. For their further advantage, a few of the actors invited as many of the work-people and their families as chose to attend the theatre, free of charge, on Sunday afternoons, ostensibly for the purpose of reading a London newspaper to them; but this reading gradually assumed the form of a lecture on morals and temperance, or rather a discussion on those subjects; any one present being encouraged to question the reader or speaker, who seized every opportunity of introducing applicable anecdotes, quotations, and sentiments.\* Whether these meetings had much effect in improving the Livingstonian mind, I cannot say, but the Sunday afternoon uproar was considerably abated by them.

Two of our *corps*, who had been for some time engaged, were married at Pikely Beck; and when the bridegroom in prospective went to the clerk's house to 'put the askings in'—namely, to give notice that the bans were to be published—that functionary, warned by frequent misadventure, requested him and his intended to come *sobber* to church, or Mr T. wouldn't marry them! When the happy day arrived, and the ceremony was over, on retiring to the vestry, the same official intimated to the wedding-party, that *if any of us could write*, we were to affix our names in the register as witnesses, and that those who could not write, were to *make their mark*! On the very next Sunday, a boy about four years old was brought to be christened; the godmother, a flauntily dressed young woman, bungled and stumbled so at the few simple responses that she was expected to make, and looked so comically perplexed, that an irrepressible titter arose amongst the congregation; and when the minister sprinkled the baptismal water on the child's forehead, the urchin horrified all present by asking, with a fearful oath, what the *old fool* meant by it! Very

\* A regular town missionary, who had formerly made an attempt to enlighten these men, had been treated with great contumely, and was glad to make his escape out of the town with whole bones.

properly, the gentleman declined proceeding with the ceremony, and dismissed the parents, with an exhortation to endeavour to train their offspring in a better manner.

These brief anecdotes surely speak volumes on the (then) benighted state of the people. Yet, though so sadly deficient in many respects with regard to manners and education, 'we found great love among them; they were continually sending presents to every member of our company: silk handkerchiefs of the most gorgeous colours (orange excepted), ribbons of large showy patterns, artificial flowers, pork-pies, pots of honey, and bottles of pickles; articles not quite so costly as the Kean testimonial, or the claret-jugs and services of plate occasionally presented to actors by their ardent admirers, yet acceptable as tokens of the estimation in which we were held by our supporters, who, with a delicacy which one would hardly have expected from them, invariably left their gifts at our lodgings during our absence in professional hours, and without a clue to the donor. One night we played the *Hunter of the Alps*, a pretty old-fashioned drama, in which my children performed the parts of little half-starved cottagers. I perceived that the spectators sympathised deeply with their supposed sufferings; the cake given by Felix, a chance visitor, was loudly welcomed by the lookers-on; and so impressed were those kind-hearted folks with the idea that my young ones could not possibly have been trained to act their parts so naturally, without having been condemned to suffer the pangs of real hunger, that every week thereafter a huge currant-loaf was sent to them; also, whenever they stirred abroad, some one who had seen the *Hunter of the Alps* was sure to insist on taking them to the nearest general shop, and treating them to cakes, tarts, and 'goodies.' There was no lack of honesty either amongst those rough workmen. Towards the Thursdays before the 'big pay,' cash was a scarce commodity with them, and our doorkeeper used to give credit for the Thursday and Friday nights' admission to as many as seventy or eighty persons, who, punctually as Saturday night came, paid up without the necessity of a reminder. They were witty, too, in their way, frequently making very laughable and pertinent remarks. Our chambermaid was fond of singing *I'm o'er Young to Marry yet*; this she used to lug in, head and shoulders, in nearly every part that she went on for, until one night, one of her hearers took the liberty of contradicting her, roaring out with the lungs of a Stentor: 'Not at all, miss—you're eighteen at least!' This caused a general laugh at the lady's expense, for she was eight-and-thirty, and, being inclined to *embonpoint*, looked still older. The luckless song was shelved after that. On another occasion, we were representing the *Corsican Brothers*; in the scene where the murdered Louis comes to warn his brother of his fate, and by a clever mechanical contrivance, only the ghostly head rises through the floor of the stage, on the right-hand side, but as the unearthly visitor crosses it, more and more of the apparition is slowly developed, until, by the time it has arrived at the opposite side, the entire figure is visible: the house, previously breathless with horror at the dreadful sight, was thrown into convulsions of laughter, on hearing a voice from the gallery exclaim: 'Och, milia murther! By my sowl, he grows like a mushroom!'

Stock business was excellent with us for three months; then came on the benefits. Of course, every one, according to his or her idea of what would be attractive, produced some novelty; one of the gentlemen got up a sensation between play and farce on his night by employing two blacksmiths' strikers to break with sledge-hammers a stone weighing two hundred and thirty pounds on his chest; the dancer, for his benefit, got up a pantomime; the leading-man, *Sardanapalus*, much mangled in diction, but improved

with combats and a dance; for my benefit, I localised *Crazy Jane*, and practised the Northumbrian dialect, in which, as the heroine, it was my intention to indulge, but was obliged to give it up, finding, after a week's hard work, that I had acquired, not a burr, but a sore throat. Every appeal to the public met a hearty response; and at the close of a sixteen weeks' season, we found that shares had averaged thirty shillings a week, in addition to which, each *beneficiaire* had cleared from four to five pounds; in short, we had been highly successful, and had saved money—rent, wearing apparel, and provisions being all moderate in price; and could we have reconciled ourselves to the 'hail-fellow-well-met' manners of the people—who spoke of the actresses as 'show-dolls,' and accosted the actors as 'mateys' and 'chums'—if we had not been annoyed by the scarcity of water, the want of gas, roads, and other concomitants of civilised towns—the discomforts of the houses, whose roofs were sieves, whose doors and windows were difficult to open, and more difficult to shut, we should have been perfectly satisfied. As it was, we quitted the place with regret, and went our several ways to winter engagements.

Some years passed away before it was again our lot to visit Livingstone. The aspect of the place was entirely changed, and infinitely for the better; there were then good roads, gas, water (we were told that Micky, the waterman, had made a fortune, and had retired to his native Limerick to enjoy it); a money-order office, two printers' and several stationers' shops, a reading-room, schools, and two chapels, while within half a mile there was a railway station. There were great alterations, too, at the ironworks; the noisy old 'bulldogs' were numbered amongst the things that had been. Mr Sievier's invention had done away with puddlers, had lessened the number of workmen required, and increased the quantity of work performed; the people had grown more steady and more home-loving; a band had been formed; the lending library was greatly patronised, and with books and music to cheer their evenings, the inhabitants were less inclined to spend them abroad—a disinclination that rendered our second visit far less profitable, although in other respects, far more agreeable than our first campaign at Livingstone.

#### SPRING.

Spring, who laves her feet in showers,  
Ere she forms her couch of flowers,  
So gently comes, that her light tread  
Is as the down from thistles shed,  
For she by love is nourished.

Spring, whose form so far surpasses,  
Clad in youthful leaves and grasses,  
The beauties of the full-grown year,  
To every sense is kind and dear,  
So sweetly she makes love appear.

Spring, who fills the warm air with wings,  
And pleasure's joyous mutterings,  
Many pure thoughts and fancies brings,  
For with the birds the heart then sings,  
Love playing on its sweetest strings.

Spring, who into blossoms breathes  
Her scented breath, and fondly leaves  
The perfume to delight our sense,  
Yields them her blush in hast'ning thence,  
To give their love dear recompense.

Spring, whose glad welcome Nature says  
In her ten thousand charming ways,  
Has over winter's darkness spread  
A bridal-dress, for she is led  
By love, and kindly nourished.

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